

Message Text

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64

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-15 AID-05

SCA-01 SCSE-00 /073 W

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R 201525Z NOV 75

FM AMEMBASSY LIMA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7728

INFO AMEMBASSY BOGOTA

AMEMBASSY LA PAZ

AMEMBASSY PANAMA

AMEMBASSY QUITO

UNCLAS LIMA 9628

EO 11652: NA

TAGS: PINT, PE

SUBJ: REPORTED COLOMBIAN EXPULSION OF SUMMER INSTITUTE OF
LINGUISTICS

REFS: LIMA 8125; LIMA 8739

1. USING AGENCE FRANCE PRESSE ITEM FROM BOGOTA, FOUR LIMA DAILIES REPORTED NOV 19: "THE COLOMBIAN GOVERNMENT, ACCORDING TO A RELIABLE SOURCE, HAS DECIDED TODAY (NOV 18) TO TERMINATE THE CONTRACT WITH THE SUMMER INSTITUTE OF LINGUISTICS (SIL), A NORTH AMERICAN EVANGELICAL ORGANIZATION WORKING WITH INDIANS. THIS ORGANIZATION WHICH OPERATES ESPECIALLY IN LATIN AMERICA - ECUADOR, PERU, BOLIVA, AMONG OTHERS - WAS ACCUSED HERE IN RECENT WEEKS OF ESPIONAGE, TRAFFIC IN CONTRABAND GOODS, DRUG TRAFFIC AND IDEOLOGICAL PENETRATION OF POLITICAL AND SCIENTIFIC ORGANIZATIONS".

2. LEFTIST CORREO, WHICH HAS SPEARHEADED RECENT ATTACKS AGAINST SIL IN PERU (SEE REFTELS), FULLY EXPLOITED AFP ITEM WITH FRONTPAGE LEAD HEADLINE "COLOMBIA EXPELS SIL FOR SPYING, CONTRABAND AND DRUGS...". GOVERNMENT-OWNED CRONICA UNCLASSIFIED

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AND ALSO EL COMERCIO GAVE FRONTPAGE BUT MORE RESTRAINED

COVERAGE TO STORY. EXPRESO USED CORREO'S PREDUDICIAL HEAD-LINE BUT BURIED STORY INSIDE ON PAGE 16.

3. IF EMBASSY ASKED FOR COMMENT BY LOCAL REPORTERS ON SIL IN PERU, USIS WILL RESPOND BRIEFLY ALONG THESE LINES: "THE SIL HAS WORKED AMONG PERU'S INDIAN TRIBES SINCE 1945 WHEN THE FIRST OF SEVERAL AGREEMENTS WAS SIGNED BETWEEN THE SIL AND THE PERUVIAN GOVERNMENT. A GROUP OF DEDICATED NORTH AMERICANS AND PERUVIANS HAVE SHARED IN THE CONTINUING PIONEER WORK OF STUDYING TRIBAL LANGUAGES, ESTABLISHING VOCABULARIES, PREPARING WRITTEN LANGUAGES FOR THE INDIAN TONGUES, AND THE TRAINING OF INDIGENOUS LANGUAGE TEACHERS. A NUMBER OF DISTINGUISHED PERUVIANS HAVE FROM TIME TO TIME RECOGNIZED AND PRAISED THE IMPORTANT CONTRIBUTIONS OF SIL IN FOSTERING SOCIAL GOALS AMONG THE INDIANS. THE FOUNDER OF SIL IN PERU, DR. TOWNSEND, HIS COLLEAGUES AND SUCCESSORS, HAVE IMPRESSED THOSE WHO KNEW THEM AS SINCERE MEN AND WOMEN, CHRISTIANS AND HUMANISTS, RESPECTFUL OF PERU AND DEDICATED TO SERVING THE INDIAN TRIBES WITH WHOM SIL HAS BEEN ASSOCIATED." IF PRESSED ABOUT CHARGE OF ESPIONAGE IN PERU, USIS WILL RESPOND: "ALLEGATIONS ALONG THESE LINES ARE BOTH FALSE AND DEMEANING IN VIEW OF SIL'S RECORD OF SOCIAL SERVICE AND SCIENTIFIC ADVANCES AMONG THE INDIANS."

4. MINEDUC GENERAL RAMON MIRANDA AMPUERO TOLD PRESS NOV 19 THAT A GOVERNMENTAL COMMISSION IS CONDUCTING "ON SITE INVESTIGATION" INTO SIL AND WILL SHORTLY RECOMMEND CONTINUANCE OR NOT OF SIL IN PERU. REGARDING COLOMBIAN ACTION, HE ADDED: "WE RESPECT THE DECISIONS OF OTHER COUNTRIES BUT WE ARE JEALOUS OF OUR PREROGATIVE OF MAKING OUR OWN".

5. COMMENT: THE REPORTED ACTION OF COLOMBIAN GOVERNMENT WILL COMPLICATE THE SCHEDULED FEBRUARY RENEWAL OF SIL'S CONTRACT BY PERUVIAN MINEDUC. THE HOSTILE LEFTIST PRESS, MORE THAN EVER, IS BENT ON TREATING THE CONTRACT RENEWAL AS A POLITICAL ISSUE RATHER THAN TECHNICAL DECISION.
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